

RUSSIA AND THE WEST IN IRAN

erous Northern Neighbor." Good examples of this attitude, dictated either by fear or by caution, can be found on such occasions as the anniversary of the Red Army, of the November Revolution, or of Lenin's death. For instance, *Setareh*, a newspaper regarded as consistently pro-American, wrote on one such occasion:

Today in all the Soviet republics the Red Army anniversary is celebrated. ... In the name of the Iranian nation and in view of the good relations which exist between us and the Soviets, we congratulate the Soviet Republics on the occasion of the twenty-sixth anniversary of the Red Army and we wish them success in the struggle for security and independence of all the Soviet nations.¹²

Anxious to appear as friendly as possible and borrowing even the words from the conventional Soviet dictionary, the *Journal de Tehran* wrote on the same occasion:

And for us Iranians who from the first day have been the sincere friends of the Soviet peoples and for us who are at present active allies, it is a joy to assist in the triumphs of this Red Army without which very certainly the freedom-loving nations would have succumbed long ago under the boots of the fascist hordes.¹³

Such statements can be considered as typical. Apart from exerting various pressures and inducements, the Soviet Embassy had one very important weapon: it supplied newsprint to some newspapers. The general consensus was that the *Journal de Tehran* was among the recipients.

In the fall of 1943 another center of propaganda was established, the Irano-Soviet Society for Cultural Relations. The pompous ceremony of inauguration took place in the presence of Premier AH Soheily, Iranian cabinet ministers, the Soviet Ambassador, and many

other notables. The society constituted a branch of the well-known Soviet institution V.O.K.S., which specializes in dispensing propaganda abroad through cultural mediums. It manifested great vitality in Teheran and in the provinces. It established libraries of Soviet publications, conducted courses on Russian language and literature, organized innumerable lectures, concerts, receptions, art exhibitions,

12 Feb. 23,1944.

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